



MONGOL MONITOR

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JANUARY 2012

January Mission News

Acting Director Karen Hilliard held a series of introductory meetings with USAID/Mongolia implementing partners as well as other development organizations within the international community. Donors and partners had high praise for USAID's work with local civil society organizations and stakeholders. A number of these programs were noted as models for the donor community at large.



Welcome cake for Karen

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) hosted the first Ambassador's meeting on the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) on January 24th. RIMES was established in 2009 with support from the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund, administered by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Government of Denmark; Mongolia is a full member state and has taken on the Secretariat role for the organization through 2013. In addition to receiving daily weather forecasts and being eligible for training opportunities, three remote communities in Mongolia are currently participating in a pilot program to provide feedback concerning on-the-ground conditions. Non-member nations present at the meeting were asked to contribute to the RIMES effort by increasing their sharing of technical expertise.

USAID/Mongolia staff visited Ulaanbaatar's Tuberculosis (TB) clinic on January 25th. While TB is the third most prevalent disease in Mongolia, it's the leading cause of death by infectious disease in the country. According to Dr. Batbayar, Director of the TB Surveillance and Research Department, National Center for Communicable Diseases, the TB situation in Mongolia is worsening with 4,200 new cases reported last year, 20% of which were students. Rates are increasing not only among high risk

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groups, but the general population as well. Dr. Batbayar attributed the growing problem to lack of government support and knowledge about TB,

also noting a lack of doctors who specialize in TB.

A number of USAID/Mongolia staff brushed up on their knowledge and skills during the month of January by attending courses on Evaluation as well as Program Design. Building evaluation skills in particular is a high priority for USAID. Built on USAID's rich tradition of evaluation, current policies sets out an ambitious recommitment to learn as we "do," updating standards and practices to address contemporary needs. In an increasingly complex operating environment, the discipline of development demands a strong practice and use of evaluation as a crucial tool to inform our global development efforts, and to enable USAID to make hard choices based on the best available evidence.

PRIVATE SECTOR-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH

Business Plus Initiative Project (BPI) Chemonics

Association Strengthening and BPI Grants Program

BPI hopes to award a first tranche of grant funding to 4 or 5 local private sector associations in February 2012. To date, 27 grant concept proposals valued at over 1.1 billion MNT have been submitted to the project. The funding will assist in building institutional and operational capacities of the recipients.

Quality Assurance Initiative



BPI continues to deliver high impact quality assurance training that. To date, 46 individuals have participated in a food safety "hygiene foundation" course

with 40 more attending second stage Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) training. All have taken examinations at each level through a BPI accrediting partner, Chartered Institute of Environment Health (CIEH). BPI's training and certification program is gaining prominence across Mongolian pri-

vate and public sectors.

Official Launch of the Banking and Finance Academy

On January 13th the Banking and Finance Academy officially launched its activities with the Bank of Mongolia, handing over training equipment and materials. The Academy is an independent training institute focused on excellence in banking and financial services in Mongolia.



Compulsory Drivers' Insurance Roundtable Discussion

In collaboration with the Financial Regulatory Commission (FRC) and Press Institute, a roundtable discussion on the new law on Compulsory Drivers' Insurance event was held on January 6th for Economics Journalism Club (EJC) members. The law became effective on January 1, 2012; specialists from the FRC Insurance Department and Mongolian insurance companies responded to questions from journalists, explaining the intent and scope of the new law. This is the first law on compulsory insurance aimed at protecting third parties' interests and improving drivers' responsibility. In addition, two EJC events on Public Private Partnerships and Effective Writing Skills were also held.

USAID CENTRALLY AND REGIONALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority EcoSystems (SCAPES) Project -- USAID Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

Livestock, Not Mongolian Gazelles, Drive Foot & Mouth Disease Outbreaks

Wildlife health experts from the Wildlife Conservation Society published evidence supporting the conclusion that Mongolian gazelles—one of the most populous large land mammals on the planet—are not a reservoir of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), a highly contagious viral disease that threatens both wildlife and livestock in Asia. The study, titled "Serosurveillance for Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Mongolian Gazelles (*Procapra gutturosa*) and Livestock on the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia," appears in the January edition of the Journal of Wildlife Diseases. The authors include: Sanjaa Bolortsetseg, Shiilegdamba Enkhtuvshin, Wendy Weisman, Amanda Fine, Angela Yang, and Damien Joly of the Wildlife Conserva-

tion Society; and D. Nyamsuren of the Dornod Aimag Veterinary Laboratory, Choibalsan, Dornod Province, Mongolia.



A radio/satellite collared Mongolian gazelle is released. Photo credit: Takehiko Y. Ito/Arid Land Research Center-Tottori University (Japan).

BBOP Issues Standard on Biodiversity Offsets, 25 January 2012

The document presents a standard on biodiversity offsets, with The Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program (BBOP) issued standards intended to help determine whether an offset, implemented in accordance with BBOP Principles. An offset serves to counterbalance negative impacts that a development project, mining operation, etc., may create. The BBOP Advisory Group Members, including the Mongolian Ministry of Nature, Environment & Tourism, agreed to ten Principles in 2009. This standard is presented as a hierarchy of Principles, Criteria and Indicators (PCI), an architecture similar to that used in a number of other standards, such as the Forest Stewardship Council, the Marine Stewardship Council, the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, Round Table on Responsible Soy, and others. A copy of the standard can be downloaded at the following website: <http://bbop.forest-trends.org/guidelines/Standard.pdf>

Multi-Agency Teams Step Up Efforts to Prevent Illegal Transboundary Trade in Wildlife as Regional Borders Open January 6 – 26, 2012

The Multi-Agency Team of law enforcement and wildlife protection staff worked overtime in January to increase public awareness activities (wildlife trade law information broadcasts through TV and radio), patrol trade routes, inspect markets, and coordinate with customs officials at the borders in anticipation of the increase in the volume of trade as borders between Mongolia and China open in the weeks leading up to the Chinese New Year. The regional borders will open again on February 2, 2012 and trade will proceed until the Mongolian Lunar New Year, beginning on February 22, 2012.

Mongolian National Consensus Building Program (NCB) - USAID International Republican Institute (IRI)

IRI Prepared for Training for Parliament Publicity Center Staff

Throughout the month, IRI worked with the State Great Hural Secretariat to conduct a two-day seminar for the staff of Parliament Publicity Centers. The seminar is scheduled to take place at Ih Tenger complex, Ulaanbaatar from February 15-16, 2012. Twenty-nine staff from the Parliament Publicity Centers from 20 aimags and 9 districts of Ulaanbaatar will attend the seminar. Experts of the Parliament Secretariat and Parliament Standing Committees as well as the professors of the National University of Mongolia and Academy of Management have been invited to make presentations and deliver lectures to the seminar attendees. The training seminar will provide important information to the Parliament Publicity Center staff on ways to improve their public outreach skills. It will also serve as venue for the staff of the Parliament Publicity Centers to exchange ideas and share experiences on better parliament publicity practices.

Fostering an Inclusive Environment for the Disabled Project 2 (FIELD-2) Mercy Corps

The Community Awareness of Accessibility Standards Increased in Uvurkhangai Aimag

The Working Group of Uvurkhangai Province conducted training on accessibility standards through two local TV channels for the local community. While there are 27,000 people and about 180 organizations that own buildings in Arvaikheer province center of Uvurkhangai, only 12 organizations currently have ramps to their main entrances, demonstrating a lack of awareness of accessibility standards. The training included all relevant details of the accessibility standards such as door width, ramp slope, signs and handrails. The Working Group estimates 30% of all citizens received information through the TV broadcast.

DPOs and Government Officials Boost their Capacity

Local Disabled People's Organizations continued their attendance at the capacity building training organized by FIELD 2 project team. In total, two hundred and thirty seven citizens and local officials took part in the training, focusing on increased understanding of the social model of disability, proposal writing techniques, establishing "Person with Disabilities" group for income generation, and accessibility standards.

Enabling Market Integration through Rural Group Empowerment (EMIRGE)
CHF International

EMIRGE confronts the challenge of rural poverty commonly faced by marginalized farmers by designing and testing methods to collaboratively mobilize rural resources toward attainable market opportunities. In Mongolia, EMIRGE works with small-scale producer groups to raise productivity and profitability through innovation and greater integration with other economic actors.

Sharing Knowledge and Practice

In January, EMIRGE organized a shelter building study trip to Zuunharaa, facilitated by local consultants and farmer group members. Forty new farmers from Baruunharaa and Zuunharaa learned about modern shelter building for cows, obtained knowledge to improve and renovate their animal shelters.

Training Trip to Milk Processing Company

A critical component of the On-Farm Management Training (OFMT) is milk cleanliness and quality. In this regard, EMIRGE organized a training with the “Suu” company to address these issues. Facilitated by the company’s food and milk technician, 40 farmers from Zuunharaa and Baruunharaa participated.

Learning and Dissemination

A 20 minute short film on farmer group activity was broadcast on MN25 TV twice during peak hours. After the broadcast, CHF received several phone calls from outside farmers after which EMIRGE team started an activity on sharing and disseminating knowledge through phone - Happy phone service. Through this activity we will be sharing contacts of farmer groups and local consultants to facilitate building relationship building with other farmers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FUNDED PROJECTS MANAGED BY USAID/MONGOLIA

Rural Agribusiness Support Program (RASP)-USDA
Mercy Corps

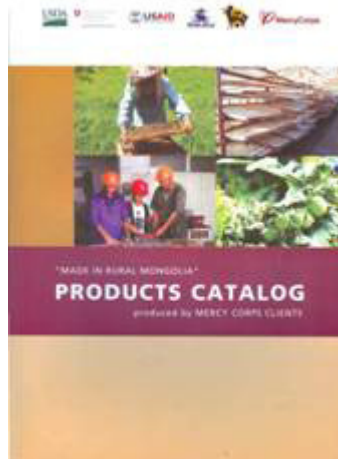
99 New Startups and Business Expansions from Young Rural Entrepreneurs

Between November 2011 to January 2012, RASP facilitated a comprehensive young business training program in 10 aimags (Arkhangai, Bayankhongor, Dundgobi, Gobi-Altai, Gobisumber, Hovd, Sukhbaatar, Uvurkhangaig, Uvs and Zavkhan). In these 12-day special courses, 158 young entrepreneurs under 35 attended with 91.1% completing the two-staged business and technological skill building training. After the training, 68.8%, or 99, of the partici-

pants developed business plans to start up or expand their businesses and applied to commercial banks for loans.

MADE IN RURAL MONGOLIA Product Catalog

Mercy Corps Mongolia portfolio 2011/2011 covers four rural economic development projects that are generously supported by United States Agency for International Development, United States Department of Agriculture, Swiss Agency for Development, and Cooperation and UK-based The Adventurists. It is encouraging to see the micro, small and medium entrepreneur clients to successfully start, expand and diversify their businesses. They continuously increase new and improved product manufacturing, create new jobs and make a tangible contribution to rural market development and poverty reduction. In order to support the promotion of the products of our clients we have published the new product catalog “Made in Rural Mongolia”. More than 1000 products manufactured by over 120 rural producers in 12 target aimags have been compiled in this 130 page booklet. The catalog includes a wide range of products: food, clothes, handicraft, wooden furniture and other goods and services of high demand on domestic but also foreign markets. The catalog is available in Mongolian and English and is being distributed among others to donors, partners and peer agencies,



tourism companies and hotels, retailers and private sector companies and sent to aimags for local distribution; in addition, the catalog can be downloaded in both languages from the Mercy Corps Mongolia web site www.mercycorps.org.mn.

Dairy Sector Reference Book

With the dairy sector expanding in Mongolia, dairy businesses and dairy business service providers faced the challenge of finding information on types of equipment, packaging materials, suppliers, and quality standards and regulations. In cooperation with the Mongolian Bactrian Association, RASP developed and published the first “Reference Book of Dairy Sector” for Mongolia. The 150 page booklet covers information along the whole value chain from dairy breeds and nutri-



tional value of milk and its products to dairy sector relevant associations, governmental agencies and regulatory framework. One thousand copies of this first edition is about to be distributed free of charge.

Local Entrepreneurs Develop Recommendations for Business Development in Sukhbaatar Aimag

On January 26, the Business Forum-2012 in Sukhbaatar Aimag was held in Baruun Urt. This event was organized by the Aimag Governor's Office and Aimag Agricultural and Light Industry Department with support of USDA RASP. More than 85 local entrepreneurs from 16 soums participated together with the aimag governor and representatives of the aimag's agricultural department and agricultural extension center, business incubating and business development organizations and aimag commercial banks. The participants discussed the aimag's specific opportunities and constraints of business development and expansion. New business ideas were shared and information on government support to local business development such as "Mongolian livestock" and "Small and medium enterprise development" programs was provided. During the forum the recommendations for future business developments in Sukhbaatar aimag was drafted and the forum was completed with small business experience exchange tours through plants producing organic juice, paper package, sausage and bakery; to the aimag's technology training center, a small dairy farm and the local greenhouse in the aimag center.

Gobi-Altai Aimag Food Market Can Now Offer Safe Meat and Milk

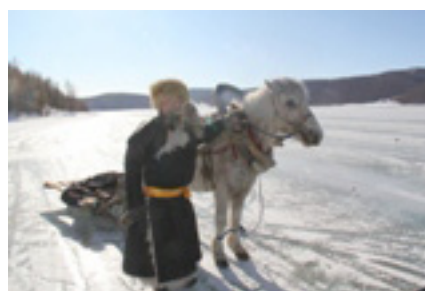
After participating in the "modern food market demonstration training" by RASP in Arkhangai aimag in 2009, Mr. Batdelger, Director of Shine-Altai Food Market Company in Altai, understood the importance improving food safety conditions of his market. He decided to build a new food market and invested a

total of US\$ 960 million in 2010. The construction of the market allowed the food entrepreneurs who previously worked in places that did not meet food safety and health standards to work in warm indoor spaces covering an area of 864m². Today, 120 traders can offer their products to the local consumers in a warm and clean environment providing greater choices to their customers and the company earns \$ 8 million revenue per months. Accommodated within this market is an independent food quality testing facility. Mercy Corps supported this laboratory with a \$2300 equipment sub grant in August 2011 for freezer, microscope, analysis equipment and technical assistance on food safety and lab testing.

Local Veterinarians Cover Training Costs for Vet Technicians

In collaboration with the School of Veterinary Science and Biotechnology (SVSB), RASP is organizing the Veterinary Technician Training four aimags involving 79 trainees in January and February 2012. The training will raise the professionalism of veterinarians and create new jobs in rural areas by training currently unemployed people as vet technicians. This year's participants received the full cost of the training of (\$110) from local veterinarians who will employ them after completion of the course. With disease outbreaks such as foot and mouth disease and sheep pox, local private and governmental veterinarians have come to greatly appreciate the benefits of trained veterinary technicians.

January in pictures



New food quality testing laboratory within Shine Altai food market in Gobi-Altai aimag